

Kathleen Marquis-Girard
Portland Public Schools
LD 1632

Letter in support of passage of MECDHH/GBSD LD 1632 - Chapter 304

To: Educational and Cultural Affairs Committee

Date: February 9, 2022

In my 36 years as a public school teacher and administrator, I have had the privilege of working with MECDHH/GBSD on behalf of students and families. I was part of the integration of GBSD programming at Portland Public Schools at both the middle and high school level.

Over my career, I have been a participant in countless IEP meetings in a number of districts and have observed firsthand the critical need for and impact of shared resources and supports. Articulation and clarity of funding resources as proposed by Chapter 304 will ensure there are no lapses or gaps in educational programming and transportation for identified students across the State of Maine. These changes proposed will allow for greater equity of services for all hard of hearing/deaf children.

The changes proposed to LD 1632 would also expand the critical need for services to early intervention and the creation of programming for children. Early intervention for students with special needs is essential to achievement levels, along with their mental, physical, and emotional growth.

Finally, the changes proposed address the physical facilities on Mackworth Island and the location of the additional sites across the state. Creating and improving these sites are necessary to fully support the educational programming as outlined and would allow for summer programming and professional development activities.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or have any questions.

Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely,

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